

-----Original Message-----

From: Melissa Miller-Henson

Sent: Saturday, February 19, 2005 1:06 PM

To: SeaChall@aol.com

Cc: YScuba@californiadivers.com; MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov

Subject: MLPAComments: RE: Rickett's Underater Park

Dear Daniel,

Thank you for your message and interest in the California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative. A working knowledge of the California coast that you and others provide will be an invaluable part of this initiative.

Please keep in mind that the Blue Ribbon Task Force is currently seeking comments specific to the Preliminary Draft Master Plan Framework, especially the design and evaluation section, and well as where along the central coast a study region should be established to begin to evaluate potential MPA networks or components of networks. At this time, the task force is not seeking advice on specific areas where MPAs should be located.

The decision about in what region to begin the evaluation process will be discussed Tuesday morning, February 22, in Monterey at the Blue Ribbon Task Force meeting (Portola Plaza Hotel). Once the task force selects that initial study region, we will begin a process that will *eventually* lead to a discussion about specific sites. So, in short, we're still a number of months away from asking for specific site recommendations. We hope you will continue to participate in the process and provide additional suggestions at that time regarding the Ricketts Underwater Park and other areas.

If you have any questions or need additional information, do not hesitate to contact me. With regards,

Melissa

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-----Original Message-----

From: SeaChall@aol.com [mailto:SeaChall@aol.com]

Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2005 2:28 PM

To: Melissa Miller-Henson

Cc: YScuba@californiadivers.com

Subject: Rickett's Underater Park

Dear Ms. Hensen:

I am a Senior Marine Biologist, with 34 years of research for the C.D.F.G. About ten of those years were spent supervising and conducting baseline subtidal ecological studies in central California.

I am very pleased to see the MPA process moving again, and I have some thoughts to share regarding the area off Monterey, i.e., Rickett's Underwater Park. Biologically the most important part of this park is the Monterey breakwater. I have been diving around the breakwater since the early 1960's and have observed over 60 species of fish that either inhabit the area or spend part of their lives there. Several of these species are considered depleted and are being given more protection because of overfishing and other factors that have contributed to their population declines. All of these species occur at the breakwater as juveniles; thus the area serves as an

important nursery area. Adult stages are rarely observed.

The species include bocaccio, canary rockfish, brown rockfish, black rockfish, china rockfish, cabezon and lingcod. The rocky area, as well as the surrounding sand/mud bottoms provides excellent substrate for these species during their first year of life.

A small number of sport anglers fish off the breakwater and my few observations of their catch indicates that most of the fish caught are immature and include undersize lingcod.

For these reasons I believe the Monterey breakwater should be given complete protection as part of a MPA proposal for the area from the breakwater to Lover's Point. If you are interested in seeing a list of species observed at the breakwater, I can provide it.

Sincerely,

Daniel W. Gotshall